

seal. You hold
your knee as if it were the thing
blushing, and it will be
when you move your hand. You
are so sad: under your chair
the chrome legs make a cross
in the air like fingers
across your heart.

-- Robert L McRoberts

Bristol RI

The Mixologist

Jamal asked about my father

he was born on a farm
and lived with his
eight brothers and sisters
until he was thirteen
and ran away with a small circus
where he followed elephants
around the center ring
then became a clown and juggler

years later he almost married
a woman who swung from a trapeze
by her teeth but he could see how
their life together would be

Jamal asked what happened --
how did he end up in the city
painting houses
and grinning shyly
(hiding his bad teeth)
when at sixty-two a newspaper
printed his picture mixing paint

I told her I didn't know

Wash Out

it rained so hard last night
I almost became a Jehovah's witness

water poured in between the ribs
of the patched roof

and gushed through the sashes
forming a pond where the floor
is worn in front of the sink

this morning the tractor
used for repairing the gravel road
conked out at the bottom of the hill

its operator sat on a front tire
swinging his legs as he munched
a soft white sandwich

his teeth were as broken
as the gears of his rig

he found a cigarette but no matches
threw the cigarette down
kicked the tire and cursed
linking his tractor
with an act of sexual perversion

I kept walking walking and somehow
kept thinking of you

-- Franz Douskey

Tucson AZ

Down Along The Cove

At Albertus Runyun College
In the days of giant sloths
There lived a race of people
Who lived on pumpkin broth

And all their friends
From miles around
Would gather when they sang
For apples, pears, and spark plugs
And other useless whang

They gave them to their animals
To kick amongst themselves
And went back out a-singing
To line their pumpkin shelves

But somewhere down along the cove
The dylans lurked with banjos
And as the pumpkin people passed
They turned them into mangoes